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## FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

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SUBJECT: National Intelligence Estimate on Probable Developments in Nigeria

The Embassy comments on the questions asked in preparation for the 1960 National Intelligence Estimate on "Probable Developments in Nigeria" seriatim and gives emphasis to those aspects of the questions least fully covered in previous despatches. The numbering of the answers corresponds to that of the questions.

1. The role of pressure of socio-economic progress in Nigerian politics while increasing is still considerably less than that in most non-African countries. This pressure as such is very great but so far it has not been effectively channeled into political action.

A particularly poignant example of how Nigerians searching for a better and more secure life have not found an outlet to their socio-economic frustrations in political activism is the way the Eastern Nigerian coal miner has reacted to the threat of dieselization of the railroads. These miners are largely Ibo as are most of the leaders, particularly in the Eastern Region, of the party governing in that Region, the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC). Despite economic dislocation and widespread unemployment in the coalfields near Enugu, the loyalty of the acutely unhappy coal miners to NCNC was never in doubt and the mining labor leaders knew it. True, the coal miners marched on the Eastern Region capital earlier this year and courteously asked Eastern Region NCNC Premier Michael Okpara, who immediately granted them a hearing, to find a solution to their economic problems. Dr. Okpara flew to Lagos, the federal capital, to discuss the economic situation in the mining area of his Region with leading officials of the Federal Coalition Government, in which his NCNC participates. True, this action has already produced results. An investigation has indicated that the coal is "cokable" and a glass manufacturing and steel industry in the area may well be in the offing. There is evidence that the rate of dieselization of the railroads has been slowed. However, it would be erroneous to assume that Dr. Okpara "acted" because he was afraid his party would lose the "miner vote" in the next elections if he did not do so. It is difficult to imagine at this stage of Nigerian political development that the miners even if they received no redress would join the other leading "southern" party, Action Group (AG) or an ally of it.

CJFrederick/eac

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This loyalty to NCNC can not be dismissed as "mere tribalism". It is a comforting self-identification with people who are one of them and therefore, it is believed, understand their problems sympathetically. The miners would hardly conceive of playing people whom they knew (NCNC) against people whom they did not know and who therefore did not know them (AG) in order to further their socio-economic status. Such political sophistication or one might say "alienation of affection" is only beginning to appear in still isolated instances on the Nigerian political scene.

There is strong evidence that "bread and butter" issues played a major role in the extraordinary defection from NCNC to AG among the Western Ibos in the August, 1960, Western Region House of Assembly elections. The amount of such economic identification as contrasted with "family ties" is increasing but still far from pervasive.

2. Aside from constitutional issues, the doctrinal differences among the NCNC, AG and NPC (Northern Peoples Congress) are often obscure and fuzzy and, more likely than not, dictated by the special circumstances in the three Regions; each of the three major parties is the overwhelming popular favorite in one of the three regions. A rough breakdown of the policy positions of the three major parties on leading issues (including constitutional issues) derived from party manifestoes as modified by public utterances and acts of party leaders.

#### Federal vs. Unitary State

Both AG and NPC strongly support a federal state with the federal government and the Regional government omnipotent within their constitutionally defined spheres. NCNC-Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) (hereinafter referred to simply as NCNC) favors a unitary state but "reluctantly" accepted a federation to save "one Nigeria".

#### Three Regions vs Many States

AG and, more vaguely, NCNC favor a Nigeria composed of a number of states, perhaps as many as 8 but for different reasons. AG thinks of states in ethnic terms, while the NCNC concept tends to see them more as primarily administrative units. AG justifies a multiplicity of states on the grounds they will preserve valuable particularisms while NCNC believes that more numerous but weaker states will not be able to "rock" the federation to the extent that three regions can. NPC favors the continuation of the present system of three regions.

#### Education

All three parties favor the "ideal" of universal primary education. While the wealthier AG-controlled Western Region has been able to approach this ideal, the NCNC Eastern Region Government has weathered a political storm on the matter and has succeeded in "universalizing" only the first three years of schooling. The NPC Northern Region Government has recently initiated a Universal Primary Education scheme in Kano City but has not yet done so elsewhere in the Northern Region. There is some evidence that NCNC believes that the UPE ideal must give way to needs

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for higher education to a greater extent than other parties do although all three favor the recently issued Ashby Commission's Report favoring an increased number of universities in Nigeria.

### Socialism vs. Free Enterprise

NCNC is more enamored of the word "socialism" than are the other parties although all three favor state participation in the industrial development of the countries. NCNC says it favors "fabian socialism", AG says it favors socialism so long as the right of the individual is protected while NPC is strongly suspicious of socialism as a precursor of radical change more than as Marxism per se which is little understood in Nigeria. All three parties oppose confiscation of private or foreign properties and none of the three regional governments have shown any desire to initiate such a policy.

### Communism

All three major parties strongly oppose Communism. NCNC and AG believe in the right of Nigeria's minuscule Communist population to express its point of view peacefully while the heretofore noncommittal NPC probably does not. All three parties, the NPC "reluctantly", agree to the Soviet Union "eventually" establishing an embassy in Lagos.

### Fundamental Human Rights

All three parties strongly favor the strict enforcement of the Fundamental Human Rights set forth in the Nigerian Constitution in Regions in which they do not govern.

### Foreign Policy

NCNC favors a foreign policy of non-alignment while AG and NPC officially favor a declared pro-Western policy. The changing emphasis in AG and NPC policy on this matter are better discussed under Question 4.

3. The Governor-General of an independent commonwealth country constitutionally is a figurehead. The extent to which this is so is indicated by the known fact that the Prime Minister has concerned himself with who shall be the officials on the Governor-General's personal staff. It is true that the Governor-General is Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces but he can act in this capacity only on advice of the Prime Minister.

It cannot be gainsaid of course that the Governor-General taking office, November 16, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, is a very strong personality with the largest personal following of any single Nigerian. While Dr. Azikiwe would freely offer advice, there is little doubt but that he would retain his constitutional role so long as the Prime Minister's or any other government retained a parliamentary majority. If, however, no government could obtain such a majority and public security and order broke down, Dr. Azikiwe might use his office to concentrate power in "strong hands", perhaps his own. Such a breakdown in the governmental machinery is not likely in the foreseeable future.

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However, Republican sentiment in Nigeria while still small is growing. If in several years time a Republic should be established, the Governor-Generalship as the one undisputable focal point of "one Nigeria" sentiment might well be a stepping stone to a Presidency, the precise role of which cannot be conjectured at this time.

4. The official Action Group foreign policy has not changed since the 1959 Federal Elections but several of its younger leaders, notably Easterners such as Eastern Region House of Assembly Leader of the Opposition S.G. Ikoku, have favored a policy of non-alignment. There is reason to believe that Mr. Ikoku's point of view is gaining adherents and that ostensible concessions to it have been made but recently the AG Western Region Premier, Chief S.L. Akintola, called the AG policy frankly pro-Western.

Recently, NPC, in order to accommodate its neutralist coalition partner, NCNC, agreed to a declared non-alignment policy. Thus, it is probably true that the policies of the three parties are now more closely agreed than ever before as evidenced by the fact that AG's refusal to participate in the Nigerian delegation to the current session of the United Nations was more due to failure of the Government to consult it than to any fundamental difference in foreign policy.

5. Nigerians, from whatever region or ethnic stock they come, are consciously African. Therefore, there is no question of where their sympathies lie in regard to the Union of South Africa or Algeria. All three parties are opposed to the admission to the Commonwealth of the "South African Republic" next year when South Africa because of its changed constitutional status must reapply. Nevertheless, the present Nigerian Government is not "pan-African-minded" as the Ghanaian Government and thus it may be assumed that Nigeria's reaction to events in the rest of Africa will not be as visceral and therefore not as "abrupt" as it would be in Ghana. On the other hand, the Nigerian Government would not want to "tail" other African countries in their reaction to "African" situations and may be expected to react with increasing speed and incisiveness to such situations as time goes on.

6. Communist influence in Nigeria is minimal and Khrushchev's antics in the UN plus disillusion with Soviet practices among Nigerian students who are studying or have studied behind the iron curtain indicate that Communist influence may be at a low point at the moment. An unexpected economic upheaval could change this. The breakaway Nigerian Trade Union Congress is the focal point of what little Communist activity there is although many NTUC leaders are not Communists. Both Poland and Czechoslovakia have agents operating in Nigeria but so far have not found much "grist for the mill". Because of NCNC insistence that the Communists be allowed to express themselves (a point of view shared by the opposition AG) it is unlikely that severe repressive measures will be taken although fellow travellers will continue to have difficulty in getting passports to travel behind the iron curtain.

7. There are young radicals in all three major parties, particularly NCNC and AG but even NPC. Such radicalism or adherence to a fuzzy notion of Marxism is most pronounced in the Eastern Region in which live such NCNC "comers" as Michael Ogon, Commissioner of Ogoja Province, and B.C. Okwu, Eastern Region Minister  
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of Information, and the AG socialist, S.C. Ikoku. It is from such leaders rather than the largely discredited Zikist National Vanguard that radical elements see their best opportunity to make a splash in "Southern" politics. While such elements loudly disclaim any totalitarian tendency and probably are sincere in their disclaimers in the present social and economic context, they would probably not hesitate to act without great concern for constitutional safeguards if they believed the security and well-being of Nigeria required strong action. Only a breakdown in public order or other crises would overthrow the present more cautious leadership of NCNC and AG.

There are no avowed Socialists in NPC; radical northerners tend to join NEPU. But the traditional Northern leaders are afraid of an attempt by Northern radicals to invade NPC ranks if they consider NEPU's future bleak. Even for a minister to be called "NEPUish" may prevent him from getting political preferment. Indeed Mallam Maitama Sule, Minister of Mines and Power, allegedly recently narrowly missed being named Foreign Minister despite his obvious qualifications only because NPC leaders were fearful of his unorthodoxy. Radical elements are still much weaker in NPC than in either AG or particularly NCNC but nevertheless bear watching.

For the Charge d'Affaires ad interim

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